

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2458

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Education

**Title:** An act relating to the basic education kindergarten through grade three certificated instructional staff allocation.

**Brief Description:** Regarding the basic education funding allocation for certificated instructional staff.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Sullivan, Fromhold, McIntire, Lantz, Conway, Appleton, Green, Haler, Quall, Priest, Sells, VanDeWege, Upthegrove, Haigh, Hunt, Barlow, Simpson, Williams, McCoy, Rolfes, Morrell, Ormsby, Armstrong, Jarrett, Moeller, Wallace, Seaquist, Linville, Pedersen, Blake, Hasegawa, Hurst, Goodman, Kenney, Santos, Kessler, Nelson, Chase, Lias and Darneille.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Education: 1/31/08, 2/5/08 [DP].

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Provides an enhanced staffing ratio in the statutory funding formula for Basic Education in grades K through three, to be phased in over a six-year period until the enhancement equals an additional 20.69 Certificated Instructional Staff per 1,000 full-time equivalent students.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; Barlow, Vice Chair; Priest, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Haigh, Lias, Roach, Santos and Sullivan.

**Staff:** Barbara McLain (786-7383).

**Background:**

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

By statute, the formula for distributing Basic Education funds to school districts is to be based on a staffing ratio of 49 Certificated Instructional Staff (CIS) per 1,000 average annual full-time equivalent (FTE) students in grades K through three and 46 CIS per 1,000 FTE students in grades four through 12. This is equal to one CIS for every 20.4 students in grades K through three, and one CIS for every 21.7 students in grades four through 12.

The formula in the operating budget for the General Apportionment Program provides an enhanced staffing ratio for grades K through four of 53.2 CIS per 1,000 FTE students, or one CIS for every 18.8 students. The enhancement is not considered part of Basic Education, and school districts must document actual staffing ratios at least equal to the allocation in order to receive the funds. If a district documents certain minimum staffing ratios for CIS, a portion of the enhanced funding can be used to employ additional classified instructional assistants, and in some cases to reduce class size through grade six.

The term CIS includes teachers, counselors, librarians, nurses, and other individuals who must be certified by the state to provide instruction and instructional support services in public schools. The funding formulas are for allocation purposes only, and there is no direction to school districts about prioritizing among the various staff. As a result, the staffing ratios do not provide an accurate indicator of class size.

Many researchers who study the impact of class size on student achievement rely on a particular study in Tennessee because of the unusual rigor of its research design. This study indicated that students in grades K through three who were in classes of 14 to 17 students achieved at a significantly higher level than those in larger classes.

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### **Summary of Bill:**

The statutory formula for distributing Basic Education funds to school districts includes an enhanced CIS staffing ratio for grades K through three, in addition to the 49 CIS per 1,000 FTE students in the base allocation, to be phased in as follows:

- for 2008-09, an additional 6.95 CIS per 1,000 FTE students;
- for 2009-10, an additional 9.7 CIS per 1,000 FTE students;
- for 2010-11, an additional 12.45 CIS per 1,000 FTE students;
- for 2011-12, an additional 15.19 CIS per 1,000 FTE students;
- for 2012-13, an additional 17.93 CIS per 1,000 FTE students; and
- for 2013-14 and thereafter, an additional 20.69 CIS per 1,000 FTE students.

School districts must document actual staffing ratios at least equal to the allocations in order to receive the enhanced funds and may use enhanced funds to provide facility improvements or additions related to class size reduction in grades K through three.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) There have been many discussions about how smaller class sizes, particularly in grades K through three, will lead to improved student achievement. This will enable us to reach a level where classroom teachers will really be able to get the most out of their students. Washington remains 46th in the nation in class size. Teachers need to know their students, adjust their instructional strategies, and have time for individualized instruction. Lowering class size will have a profound impact on student achievement. Every student needs to be challenged and assisted in his or her own way. When students are asked how they might benefit from a smaller class, they say they would be able to focus, and the teacher would have more time to teach. One doesn't have to be an expert in teacher ratios to know that smaller numbers of students make for better teaching. Too many students in the room robs each student from the benefit of quality instruction.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative Sullivan, prime sponsor; Mary Lindquist, Elizabeth Donnelly, and Amy Maarsingh, Washington Education Association.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** (In support) Jennifer Priddy, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.